

To Dr. Flick from Dr. Bracken.

Minnesota State Board of Health,
514 Pioneer Press Bldg., St. Paul, Minn.,
Nov. 9, 1903.

My dear Doctor:

Yours of Nov. 7th was duly received. I am pleased with your statement that the Henry Phipps Institute will take a neutral position for the time being in this Congress of Tuberculosis question and that you will pursue your course of education and endeavor to stimulate effort everywhere. I quite agree with you that the plans which you began a year ago should not be laid down; the attempt of correlating tuberculosis workers so far as possible, and aiding every man in the field who wants aid.

I quite agree with you that medical politics should not creep into, not only your plans, but any general work bearing upon the subject of tuberculosis. I am speaking as an outsider, and am trying to look at the matter for the general good of all parties concerned.

I quite agree with you that Drs. Trudeau and Biggs should not be left out of any congress dealing with tuberculosis. Both of them are pioneers along their special lines. You speak of Dr. Lewis having practically ignored men working along the lines of tuberculosis. I had not considered it ignoring. My idea was rather that Dr. Lewis had thought there was an abundance of time to work up this Congress for 1905 and that he had pushed the matter very far up to the present; that his whole point had been one of organization, and that he intended to approach these special workers later on. I am inclined to think that Dr. Lewis did not appreciate the largeness of the work before him. In his organization as carried to the present point he might have made a mistake in approaching certain executives throughout the country in the first instance rather than the men who were doing special work pertaining to tuberculosis. I presume his idea in following this course was that said executives would be familiar with the special workers from their individual states and would be able to get them interested in the work. I know you will understand the spirit in which I have made this last statement, and I trust that Dr. Lewis will take prompt action now to solicit the support of the men whom you feel he should have approached in the first instance.

I must admit that I still feel that a mistake was made in New York in 1902 in the attempt to create a proper Congress of Tuberculosis out of the old Clark Bell machine. I did not take part in that meeting although I was present, and my advice at that time was that we should allow the old organization to die. Still further I feel as you do that if an attempt had to be made at that time to create a new organization out of the old, the officers should have been chosen from the special workers along the lines of tuberculosis. I presume that Dr. Lewis was looked upon as a good executive and a good organizer, and was chosen for this reason by those who were acting as representatives of the Congress. I hope the present complications may be worked out satisfactorily and I even go further and trust that conditions may be such as to secure your support for this Congress represented by Dr. Lewis as its president.

Sincerely yours,

H. M. Bracken,

Dr. L. F. Flick.